

PROFESSIONAL
TROUBLEMAKER
with LUVVIE AJAYI JONES

SEASON 5, EPISODE 4

PULL THE WEEDS

Luvvie: [00:00:00] How would you say my leadership was like? And you can be honest. Like I want you to actually be honest, like a legit tell the truth. Okay.

Let these people know.

Sally: First of all, I'll tell you, we did not prep for this. This is how Luvvie rolls. We just go. Let's be prep. Um, there was no rules given. So I saw your leadership as... [00:00:30] [00:01:00] [00:01:30]

Luvvie: Hey y'all, it is Luvvie back with another episode of Professional Troublemaker, where I am deep diving into the highs, the lows, Yo, if you tune into the last three episodes, you heard all about why 2023 was my hardest year in business. I've given you all the information about [00:02:00] how I built a team and then how that team started crumbling.

If you haven't already, Go back to listen to those episodes. They are worth your time. So in this episode, I'm bringing somebody we introduced in episode two, the build your foundation episode, where remember the HR consultant who observed my team for three months and made recommendations on what to tweak, who to fire, the one who I called the team gardener.

Well, she's here [00:02:30] today to give us her perspective and the inside scoop on the dysfunction, my blind spots, and when she knew my company needed a major overhaul. So I'm joined by the amazing. Sally Thornton, Sally is an instigator on how to thrive in the future of work. She's the founder of Forshay, a company that connects the Bay Area's most innovative companies with exceptional talent and a frequent keynote [00:03:00] speaker on the future of work.

This conversation, everything. So let's Jump into it.

Sally, welcome.

Sally: Thank you.

Luvvie: So you've been listening to the podcast also.

Sally: I did. I loved it.

Luvvie: And I was like, you know what? I think we need to bring the gardener to the table. I

Sally: Said no one,

like no,

one let's talk about HR and people issues and firing. No one.

Luvvie: we need to though. That's why we're all over here. Tussling. [00:03:30]
So I do think we need to be talking more HR stuff too.

When I was telling the story about even building the team and then firing the team, I literally was like, you know what? It'd be good to talk to somebody who was there watching the crumbling in real time, because I also wanted to get the perspective outside of myself. And I wanted to bring you to the table, Sally, so you can let these people know what it was, what was actually happening in case I was being inaccurate.

So you have also listened to the [00:04:00] last couple of episodes. So you've, you've heard all the facts I put forward. What was your reaction when you would listen to the episode? You gave me one of them right before this.

Sally: Yeah. So my first one was, I can't believe she's telling all of it. So there's telling the truth and then there's telling all of it. And so I'm used to telling the truth, but I'm also used to holding people's confidences about things that there might be sensitive about and they don't want to share all of it.

Luvvie: Mm hmm.

Sally: I was like, damn, [00:04:30] this is fantastic. it takes courage because. Talking about letting people go, anything in that HR realm, usually a lot of people have a lot of fear.

Luvvie: hmm.

Sally: can create business risk. And I really feel like there's risk in anything, but I love that you are in the, like, I'm into it.

Like the risk of not telling the truth is that everyone is in like a cloud of, of fear. thinking they're alone. And what you do is dispel the cloud and be like, you know what? Let's say the full truth. Let's not just like give you [00:05:00] the part that's kind of, that it's comfortable. You don't do the comfortable truth.

You do like all of it.

Luvvie: I do all of it. And for me again, like I really came into the season with the idea of like an understanding, That we are all silently struggling. And because of it, we're feeling even more alone and more dejected because we think we're the only ones going through it. And this season actually came to me to do in this theme when earlier this year, [00:05:30] Instagram being like 2023.

Was one of my, was the hardest year of business I've ever had. And Sally, the responses from people who even shocked me, like people were like, Oh my God, you just spoke my language. So I was like, wait a minute. We were all dealing with such brutal business year and none of us were talking about it because we were all of course in the trenches and I just think about how.

Silence keeps us stuck. So yeah, I, I really want this season [00:06:00] to really, demystify all this stuff because I think entrepreneurship is just still so full of secrets.

Sally: Yeah. Well, and then there's this interesting part of business of some companies are ahead. Meaning they see, they get the beginning of the falling of the knife. So when the economy starts to shift certain companies and mine's one of them, which is like painful, we feel it first because people contract on hiring, let go of their consultants or contractors.

Don't give a [00:06:30] shit what I try to do. Like the gardening work that I do, no one cares about, you know? So I started to feel it before our offsite. So when we had that amazing offsite, first of all, it was fantastic. And the team was like ready to go.

And I remember turning is Martin, our finance person. Okay. You remember names are that I remember turning being like, how do we know we're going to hit these numbers? Because My business is going down and I know I'm a leading indicator in professional [00:07:00] services of like other things. And she, he was like, Luvvie, you're just getting to know her like force of nature.

And I'm like, cool, cool, cool, cool.

Luvvie: so tell us more about what you do, Sally. Like, I, I basically described you as a HR expert and consultant, but you break down what your company actually does and what your expertise is.

Sally: thank you. I'm weird. So it's hard to, it's hard to explain, but essentially what I tried to do is make work better and the way I try to do that is either [00:07:30] teams don't have enough people, so we need to hire them. So who do we hire? You know, matters. Um, so for my team, by the way, a diverse hire is a man, but for other teams, most other teams, it's, you know, not that.

So I try to look and say with, from a team perspective, who needs to be hired and how do we do that in the most cost effective high quality way? You know, easygoing, and then that can be both direct hire, what people are used to, what they call executive search, or it can be interim, which is like companies who are like, Hey, we don't know what we [00:08:00] need for very long, but can you, for three to six months, give us a high quality marketing, HR, finance person, anything kind of like the ops.

So basically I'm trying to load balance work. So people have decent lives. Like my get up and get excited about the world is I want to help people not be overworked.

And as part of that, what I learned was all the stuff around team dynamics. And so I. Spent some time at Stanford and I learned a lot about all of the science of work because I was seeing how it played out from the art side, but I wanted to understand underneath [00:08:30] it.

So I'm kind of a curious journey human who hangs out with really smart people and I'm a Midwesterner, so I think I'm just slightly above average. I surround myself with genius people and I start to see, Oh, these are the patterns. Of how teams do their best work individually and collectively. So that's kind of what I look at the neuroscience and behavioral science of work individually.

Cause we have our own stuff and then collectively on teams. And then I'm just up to working with good people. So I work with [00:09:00] big companies that everyone's heard of in the tech sector. Cause I'm from San Francisco or small startups where you're anyone is basically my job is no asshole role. Like as long as I'm working with someone who's, you know, doing good in the world, I'll help the garden.

Our

Luvvie: I found you was I was having my monthly conversation with my friend and mentor, Lisa stone, me and Lisa, we've known each other for shoot 14 years and we share a birthday. Okay. So like, that's the homie like me, [00:09:30] me and Lisa, January 5th. That's my Capricorn home. We, We met on a dance floor at blog her.

Okay. And I didn't even know she was the founder of blogger. When we met, we would just jam it on a dance floor. So I was talking to Lisa and it was probably like July, 2022. And I was like, Lisa, I feel stressed. This team is wearing me out. I am spending a lot of money. I don't see the point of it because they still got me on the hook for doing too much and [00:10:00] I don't know what's going on.

And Lisa was like, you know, I think I know the right person for you to talk to, cause I think she'll be really helpful to look at what you're up to and her name is Sally. And I was like, bet, connect me with Sally. And then you and I do a call. I don't remember what I said on the call. Do you remember?

Sally: yeah, I remember you were like, I am up for anything that was one that I was like, okay,

Luvvie: I said, get me together, Sally. Get me together. And what were your thoughts when you heard whatever I said to you? Cause I don't remember what that was. I [00:10:30] probably was just yelling.

Sally: uh, you know, I didn't have any. So I have to say one of my strengths is I don't have preconceived. Like, I didn't have any answers. I was just like, I got to explore it. Like, I gotta be, I gotta see what's going on to have, have a point of view other than I didn't, my only preconceived idea was she's amazing.

Look at what she's done. And so. I guess the only thing I look for is, are you both really wise in terms of being incredibly good at one thing, but also really humble and able [00:11:00] to embrace the fact that you don't know some things. That's the first thing I looked for. And you had that beyond that, it was like, team go,

Luvvie: Bet. So I was like, okay, you were like, okay, I am going to come in and I'm just going to observe. Now, what do you remember from the first? And I think the first time, yeah, the first day you, you were our team gardener. Was

right after labor day. When we came back into office, it was my, my director of operations.

First day, whole team was on zoom. Tell me what were your [00:11:30] first impressions of the team or even that meeting?

Sally: huh? I remember a lot of like earnestness, like your team was like, we want to deliver. But we're really not sure. Like they felt like they didn't have clear, they weren't clear on their own priorities.

And what I thought you did well was say like, Hey, there's a lot of really good content I have out here. I need you to pull, put together, run it by me so that you can stay at your [00:12:00] highest skillset.

And I saw them a little bit like. Messy at the bottom. And that was where I started to go. Oh, this team might just be a little junior for your ability to synthesize like Luvvie. Like, I felt like they were a little bit not confident in terms of their ability to say, yeah, I'm going to take Luvvie stuff and I'm going to put in all these places.

They were looking for a lot of approval from you, um, which is, you know, everything has a pro and a con. So I never say things are like bad or good. It's like, where's this good and where's this bad. What was, what [00:12:30] was challenging was they were always looking for your approval, which kept you in the weeds.

Luvvie: Yes. So we added you to, so you won a zoom call. We added you to our Slack, to our WhatsApp and to our base camp. After one month of observing my team, what were you thinking? Honestly.

Sally: You need a better team. Now you had, they all had qualities that, so here's what's challenging about any team. Everyone's got, [00:13:00] like, you didn't have an asshole on the team. So you recruited well in terms of values alignment. Um, intention, all that stuff, but they didn't all have the same skills and they didn't know how to communicate with each other.

Well, so that you were playing a little bit of like, all right, let me make it clear for you. You were like a water purifier and I wanted them to be able to solve problems without you. Like that was my. First goal was to like, okay, how can love you be in fewer meetings and the [00:13:30] team figure out the things amongst themselves.

And that was, I think the biggest struggle was some of them were just a little, little too junior.

Luvvie: [00:00:00] **How would you say my leadership was like? And you can be honest. Like I want you to actually be honest, like a legit tell the truth. Okay.**

Let these people know.

Sally: **First of all, I'll tell you, we did not prep for this. This is how Luvvie rolls. We just go. Let's be prep.**Um, there was no rules given. So I saw your leadership as... [00:14:00] energetic. inspiring. what else? I felt like your point of view was very clear. So where you had clarity at the upper level,

they didn't have clarity on how to operationalize it. And then sometimes because you had so many good things, there was like, well, should we sunset this? And what about this? And I would say the biggest challenge we had, which I tried to help with, is the prioritization based on ROI.

So if the prioritization is based on your [00:14:30] heart and like, I want to be in relationship with these people from different communities, like we needed to talk about that. And then if the prioritization is up leveling your financials so that you're not always doing the work, but can work can happen without you,

you know, then it's a matter of, are we actually looking at the ROI of, you know, each thing that you're launching and that the team wasn't really good at that.

And that's why we, we needed Martin to come in. We needed some other sort of financial analysis to be able to say, how do we put our [00:15:00] values in clear prioritization that also has a financial, you know, clear

path. correct. And one of the things you and I talked about in terms of even this leadership of it all. So to the point of when you came in and I said, Sally, I need you to let me know what I need to do different. Did you find anything that I needed to do different in dealing with the team as it was at that time?

Yeah. I mean, I do just, I don't think it was behavior back to, it wasn't behavior, it was prioritization and prioritization. And [00:15:30] there was always something waiting. Luvvie, remember he was like, we're going to do a bonus plan. So that they feel clear and they don't need to ask you the priorities. Like one of the things we were trying to do is get you away from being like, this is the number one priority.

Oh wait, this new thing came in. Because if we have a clear pro forma that says, here are the different lines of revenue. Here are the costs associated with them. They can make their own decisions on priorities because they can look and say, we should be spending more time on the, on a than B.

Luvvie: Right.

Sally: [00:16:00] But, and then we were going to have a bonus plan against that but we were waiting for, it was kind of like we were waiting for Martin, we were waiting for the other person to do the handoff.

Like that was the hardest. That was like some chunky changes.

Luvvie: so again, you talked about wanting to promote me to CEO, because again, I was in the weeds constantly. One of the things that I remember you did within the first month was you trying to determine. Between my chief of staff and my director of operations, right?

[00:16:30] What that shared leadership look like. Cause at that point they were considered my leads. And one of the first things you had for me, because again, I was so integral to the business that I was in everything and I'm making decisions about this. And I'm dictating this. One of the first things you challenged me to do was to allow my leads.

To decide what they wanted to create as their points and lanes of ownership. Like, right. Like the line of demarcation between director of operations and chief of staff. At one point I was trying [00:17:00] to figure it out and you were like, just let them figure it out

themselves

Sally: exactly.

Luvvie: and get back to you on it. And I was like, okay.

And I let them have it. I don't know

how that went. Mm hmm.

Sally: mean, there were pros and there were cons, right? Like there were times that they did it and there were times that they got jammed. yeah, and, and, you

know, all of this in context to a market where the revenue was falling. So I think, [00:17:30] you know, I always think about context too. Like, When things are going up and there's just an ATM that's just flowing

Luvvie: Correct.

Sally: all this, just, you know, any little grind in the gears is like, it's going to be fine.

Like you'll, you'll work it out. But when the grind is coming down, when revenue is coming down and you have team dynamic issues, I think it's always a little harder. Right. And that was where I was like, huh. Um, I'm not sure if they aren't feeling that [00:18:00] abundance. Because they don't either have a clear path to like what, where the profits were.

And also you were doing a lot of changes, Luvvie. That might be the only thing now as I'm thinking out loud. You had a lot of things in transition. You were sunseting things and you were wanting to launch new things and that, and there's technology platforms behind that.

Luvvie: We had, we had just sunsetted love nation. Yes, we were, we were ending and sunseting that platform that we'd had for two and a half years at the end of 2022. And then we were [00:18:30] getting ready for the launch of little troublemaker.

In the middle of 2023, but check this out though, the sun setting of love nation was months in the making because I was like, this team can't manage a community, so sunset it, kill it to take it off our plate. So yes, that was definitely a lot of change. We were hiring new people, sunseting the platform, about to launch a new book.

Sally: Yep. And then we changed your finance person. Yep.

Luvvie: Did we? [00:19:00] Oh, snap. I forgot that part. We did change the finance. Oh, I forgot that part.

Sally: Yeah.

Yeah.

Luvvie: our bookkeeper.

Sally: yeah,

We off.

I remember actually feeling kind of good about this because as a white woman, I was like, I'm not coming in and just firing people who don't have my mouth lack of, and so I was like, the first person I fired was white.

Luvvie: [00:19:30] Oh my God. I completely forgotten that part. Oh my God. You surely did come in and was like, yeah, the book, cause you asked for a particular, you asked for a financial report and she did not give you the right one. You were like, what is this? Oh

Sally: don't know any entrepreneur who doesn't have, you did not have any true support. Luvvie on the financial side. Like The fact that you weren't working off a pro forma that was really clear. It was mostly cash for those of you in the audience who are like, [00:20:00] what? It was just a cash based forecast for three months.

Like you didn't have the right support. So again, where your brilliance is, is in writing, but you didn't have the right business people around you yet.

Luvvie: yes. And here's the problem. So in getting the right business people to In this, in the place it's, I had found, it was like, I piece me and put people together through word of mouth. I did some executive searching, right? But the bookkeeper, particularly who was managing my books at that [00:20:30] point, literally was looking for my leadership.

And I, one of the things I am very clear about is what I'm not good at and what I am not comfortable. So I used to be like, yo, why am I dictating finances? So

Sally: you saying that. Yes,

Luvvie: I was like, why am I dictating financial reports when this is not where I play? I don't know. You're supposed to tell me what the reports I should be reading are.

So when you ask for that, Oh my God, I totally forgot that you are right. You actually, actually we fired five people by the end of that year. Actually, [00:21:00] we let go of the old bookkeeper, the content coordinator. We let go of the person who was managing love nation. Cause that, that person was on a project basis.

that was, this was end of 2022. Not even 2023 yet

Sally: Right. Mm

Luvvie: real crumbling started. Okay. Wow. I forgotten that part. Okay.

Sally: hmm.

I think for the entrepreneurs that would be like just a thing for all of us to know is there's the like what you're awesome at and then what you want to [00:21:30] compliment yourself with. And it has to start with financials because in order to keep you at your highest skill set, you have to have someone who can help you see your numbers and figure out where, where you want to grow and what's the best use of your time. That one, you just, you know, we hadn't, hadn't had the conversation before. And when I was asking you about this and you were like, I don't even know what you're talking about. I was like, motherfucker, like, this is not good. I

Luvvie: one coming on the show, cussing and letting us have it. I love it. [00:22:00] I love it for us. Okay. So actually that brings me to the next one. What are the reports that we should be getting? Cause I'm sure there's people listening to this who were like, I'm wondering if I'm getting the right financial support in this, what are the reports that every CEO, entrepreneur, whoever needs to be receiving every month from their financial team, what is like, what is useful?

What is necessary? All of that.

Sally: so what I use and I'm sure I'm going to learn the, one of the things I love about my [00:22:30] job is I'm learning from people all the time, but I'll tell you what I use, so I have to have a pro forma. And a proforma predicts what my profits, my revenue, my expenses are. So therefore I have a net profit, hopefully not in 2023, but in every other year, month by month.

And if you have a pro forma, what it does is it allows you to see, and you did have a cashflow, which was, but that's different. So pro forma is like when you expect to bill things, when you expect to expense things and you have a, [00:23:00] essentially, um, a true ability to see where do you need to add resources?

Because you're like, oh my God, we're launching this whole thing. We're going to have all this revenue. Who's going to deliver the work while we have room

on the expenses because the revenue is booked, right? Like we're going to be launching this many. Books or whatever you're launching, right? So revenue minus expenses, then you can plan your business.

Secondarily is the cash report. Many businesses do fail, which you did well because they don't have cash forecasting. So you need [00:23:30] to have both. How are the profits going to come in from an accrual perspective? And then how are our cashflow working? What you were doing great was cashflow. And what you were missing was profit forecast in order for you to be able to think ahead strategically about where to, to cut.

And that's why 2023 for a lot of people was tough is we couldn't really forecast well. So even when I, when I was listening to your last week's summary and I was like, I don't know what she's going to say about me as a business advisor, [00:24:00] because I was like, you're good to go. And then 2023 was a disaster.

So you could be like fire the freaking business advisor. But the challenge is it's a dartboard, right? Like every, so I've been in business for 15 plus years and every year I'm like, I'm not sure. I'm not sure what's going to be. I have like a number, but what the best way to do is to have like a goal, like, okay, I would like to grow by X percent, but then to break it down into more manageable numbers and then to track and be like, is this [00:24:30] real?

Right. So I can only really genuinely forecast in my business. I'm in professional services like three to six months beyond

that.

I have no idea.

Luvvie: cashflow document saved my ass, that cashflow document that I had, because I have this document that I've had for the last five years that I've made sure no matter who I work on, on the finances, that I always know where if I don't book one more business, if I don't bring in one more dollar, where I'll be in 13 weeks, On cash, because here's the thing is [00:25:00] even though my business is somewhat on an accrual basis, I always want to know where my cash is going to be.

Right. That 13 week cashflow Excel spreadsheet saved my life because I remember it's what alerted me to the fact that, Oh snap, because in the, in the absence of any other, like stronger financial report, that is what alerted me to

you are. About to be in the red in three months. Like that thing [00:25:30] saved me because then I started a revenue run, but that's a different thing.

Cause yeah, but people don't know what people don't know. So when we put people in place, that's like your job is to manage the finances. So. Make sure it works. And I'm only getting half the reports I'm supposed to get, you know, I being the person who's also trying to manage this wayward team and hire, and then writing ideas, I couldn't even pay attention to what financial reports I wasn't getting

Sally: [00:26:00] Yeah, exactly.

Luvvie: and that, Oh my God.

I'm so, how did I forget that part? I must've repressed it. Cause I was like, it's too much.

Sally: Well, and here's the thing, you know, by having the cash you had, the alert system you needed.

Um, it just cash is always very near term. And what I was hoping for you to get is also the planning that would be more middle term. Right? So as you're thinking strategically about what brand partnerships might I want to do, or how do I think about the merch store, all the different business [00:26:30] ideas you have, that's what you need to pro forma for is to, is to help you envision.

All of what's possible because you did do the cash flow really tightly. That is the red light, right? That's the like. The real deal. It's not the pie in the sky. What, what, what might we do and how do we prioritize medium term? Right.

Luvvie: So let's talk about team dynamics. So what did you notice about my team's dynamic

Sally: some people were a little bit burned out from COVID. [00:27:00] And so you had some people who were tired, like they showed up and they were like, Luvvie, I'm working so hard and I. I don't know what to do. I don't know what the priorities are. I need you to tell me what to do. And I sent this thing and you didn't get back to me.

And it was a little bit of like, It's all like, you need to save, like your mom, you're a little bit like to, to these younger people. And we don't like to talk about age and HR, [00:27:30] but so called say early in career. That's the

way you say it. That's the euphemism for age. so you had some early in career people who were exhausted and I will say collectively, this is what I've seen across clients, the benefit of my job is I get to see across companies and be like, this is not you, I can tell you across everyone, people are tired.

Right. So then they want you to tell them what to do because that's less exhausting for their brain. Like, just tell me what to do.

Right. [00:28:00] So, and then they feed off each other. There was a little too much, uh, like, yeah, isn't that so hard? Like gripe amongst each other. Um, which can be like, again, not great time spent. Um, and I felt like the professionalism, there was a little bit of like, well, if you did this and this would make it easier for me, Okay. because, because there was a lot pretty flat organization in your people. there was a little bit of like, well, if you did this better than I could do this. And then, so that wasn't a great [00:28:30] dynamic.

Luvvie: Yeah. So I'm so glad you brought that whole idea of mom because I was, I felt like I was babysitting. Like I felt like I wasn't having, I couldn't be a boss cause I was babysitting. And to your point of the fatigue of it all. I remember a few times even being like, what do y'all need from me? Do you need a break?

If you need, you know, make sure you're taking lunch. And. I was feeling like I was parenting, I was parenting, I was parenting. Yes. That, that, that feels accurate. And I remember there was [00:29:00] even one meeting that one of the meetings that I was recused from where I was told I don't have to show up because it was like a project planning meeting. Sally, after the meeting, I get four people slack me. What happened? Oh. Two people got into it in the meeting.

Oh, I don't know if you remember that

Sally: I was not in that one.

Luvvie: two people got into it in the meeting where everybody slacked me afterwards being like, that was so bad because they like, [00:29:30] they butted heads

Sally: Yeah.

Luvvie: and I now had to have individual conversations with each, I had to rewatch the meeting video.

One of them was trying to remember that one of them, I'm not going to say no name, but one of them. Was trying to get the other one to finish a project. The other one felt like you're not the boss of me. So how dare you give me a deadline? And then the other person comes to me and is like, I was like, why am I mediating?

Like, it felt like two siblings [00:30:00] bumping heads. And here I go having to be like, and then I, another meeting, somebody cried. And I go, what happened? Why did she cry? What were y'all talking about? Oh, we were just talking about the project plan. She cried over a project plan. Yeah. She just got off zoom and next thing we know she's sniffing.

I was like, Oh my God,

Sally: Yeah.

Luvvie: all this. Well, I'm like, bro.

Sally: Yeah. Yeah. Well, and going back to like, that's one where you're not alone. So like, That's what I like to be able to tell you was like, this isn't a Luvvie thing. [00:30:30] This is like a workforce exhaustion from COVID thing. And how do we solve for it? Like, what are the ways in which we create structure where they can figure it out themselves?

Again, that's where I wanted to go from a JV team to a varsity team was like, the varsity people are also tired, but they have more skills and being able to solve conflict themselves and not also step into conflict typically, right? Like. Typically speaking, when you've played in a few different games, right?

Let's [00:31:00] go with that analogy. You've got, you've got ability to be like, ah, this isn't going to go well. So I'm not going to stir it up. This is just going to cause more angst. And you know, there's just a emotional maturity because you still have feelings at work. Even if like to your point, like it's just a project plan, but you have feelings, but like how you manage them is the difference between kind of a person who is more self aware and able to self regulate.

And sometimes your coach was, was trying to [00:31:30] sort of help them. And that was when I was like, Ooh, the coach is doing too much because they need to just, yeah. There's like, how much am I responsible for as individual and how much does my company need to support my growth? Like,

Luvvie: yeah, actually, I'm so, I'm so glad you brought that up. So you ended up in meetings that I wasn't in. And then when you and I would talk during our meeting, you catch me up. And number one, you were like the, the Thursday meetings that were considered strategy meetings. You were like, they were not strategy meetings.

[00:32:00] You were like, there was no strategy being done. It was a full on like mini therapy session for them about how to handle each other. Because when we would bring it up, like, what do you need from Luvvie? Do you, do you think your workflow is too much? They'd be like, no, no, no. My work is fine. Like, I don't think my plate is too big.

So what's the problem? Yeah. What did you, what did you notice with them and the coach? Like what was happening in those meetings? That wasn't even in those.

Sally: It was like aspirational strategy, but no [00:32:30] actual strategy. It was all about execution. And even with the execution, it was, I would just say, a need for sort of work therapy. Right? And to be clear, like, I've worked with one large company that has very mature varsity players, like, you know, like a name brand, and they need work therapy, so I'm not against the fact that people need support and a place to be heard, like, And I'm, I'm there for it.

Like, I actually like to help people, but it's sort of like it should [00:33:00] be at, it shouldn't be everyone session, every person on the team. Like that was where I was like, Hmm, it's not just a few people need support for a period of time. It felt like it's became normal

Luvvie: what was the, their main hangup? Like, what was their thing that just kept on coming up for them in those meetings or whatever?

Sally: They wanted to be told what to do, which to me felt like a lack of priorities. Like they didn't really know what they should do first, second, third. And so they just wanted someone to tell them,

Luvvie: So do you remember, I don't know if, I don't know if [00:33:30] you remember at that time. So we used to have a practice called top threes.

Sally: Yes.

Luvvie: So we had a practice called top threes where every day, cause after people didn't know priorities, cause that was a problem for a bit, right? My executive coach was like, okay, how about this?

Let's put this in place. Every morning people come in and put top threes in slack, as in the three things that come hell or high water, you would accomplish that day just so everybody will see each other's top threes. Everybody can see whether they're aligned and then any [00:34:00] type of shifts that needed to be made can be made.

So that's how top threes came to be. So we would all come in there in the morning. Hey, these are my three things. I think we were still doing top threes at that point.

Sally: You

were, but let me tell you, this is actually, I, we didn't get into this. I would love to hear. So when I came in, that had sort of run its course and it was starting to kind of like, not be updated regularly. And I never got to hear it. Like, was, did it have like a beautiful period and then it stopped having a beautiful period from your perspective?[00:34:30]

Luvvie: Okay. So, and given y'all all context, these are all systems and processes that we were putting in place to respond to any time the team was not working properly. Right? So anything that you saw, any system that existed literally was built because to solve a problem. So to your point of the prioritization of them being confused, because again, a lot of times we might have four projects happening, right?

So how do you know what you're going to do that day? How do you know what you're going to do that week? We started having, we have weekly meetings [00:35:00] on Mondays and on the Monday meetings, we talk about what has to be accomplished that week, that week, not that month. The only time we talk about that month is the first meeting of the month. So. my coach recommended top threes just to have purview. And for everybody to be clear, we're all team is a verb. Everything that we're all doing is collaborative. So we should all know what everybody's working on. So we did top threes for a long time, and then it was not supposed to be a [00:35:30] permanent solution because honestly.

Why, why should we have to do that every day? But we were like, we'll do it until we realize the team can move and coast. Right. Can understand and feel their flow. So what you saw was the, was my executive coach trying to trying to

promote the team itself, like basically trying to be like, all right, we've done top threes for a while.

Y'all are used to it. We don't have to, trust yourself. Move forward. The moment we stopped doing top threes, foolishness, the moments, [00:36:00] the moments, top three stopped because we wanted to just give you one less thing to do a day. All of a sudden they're confused. I don't know what to do today. Meanwhile, mind you, our Monday meeting.

Talk about what has to be accomplished for the week. Why y'all confused by Thursday? What needs to be done? I'm I don't, I wouldn't even understand what happened between Monday and Thursday and why all of a sudden Thursday came and they're like, tell me what else to do. And I'm like, but we already did that on Monday though.

Sally: Yeah.

Luvvie: That's how [00:36:30] I started getting driven crazy because I come in meetings with you, Sally, on Thursday. And I'd be like, Sally, I don't know whether I'm the drama. Have you seen me? I'd be like, have I done anything crazy? Have you seen me post anything crazy in WhatsApp? Have I, have I confused them this week?

Have I created any, any chaos? Cause if I have, please let me know. Cause I used to be so confused about the lack of productivity.

Sally: Yeah.

Luvvie: I used to be so confused. Cause I'd be like, did I add something to the mix that [00:37:00] was not part of our

plan? Because what am I missing if they're confused by Thursday, I

Sally: I'm clear. Like, and back to my Midwestern, like I'm slightly above average and I get it. So like,

Luvvie: was not understanding. So when we started firing and after we did our strategy session, so let's talk about the strategy day, which. We all came to Chicago. We sat down for eight hours. We talked about [00:37:30] 2023. We had clear alignment on how we had clear alignments on the purposes. How did you feel that night after we

Sally: Oh my God, it was an 11. It was such a fantastic day. Everyone was aligned. The energy was there. Off the charts

Luvvie: so what the hell? Y'all need

Sally: honestly, this is where I go. Like, I think you had a great plan and then things are way outside your control in 2023, [00:38:00] right? Like things aren't coming in. And I think what I observed, but again, I wasn't in all your meetings after that, because I was like, you're good girl. I'm not invoicing you.

And then, but you know, I didn't know like economy was going to continue. Like, yeah, I'm not an economist to be able to forecast that. Um, the lack of the ability of some of your partners that were bringing in the more of the revenue that they didn't seem to really have a plan. Like this is, I think part of the challenge of a [00:38:30] brand where you are sparkly, amazing, and things come in. And yet in a down year, you have to have a plan to go out and be like, get the revenue.

Luvvie: But see, you know, what's, what's interesting is, okay. So we started firing people in 2022

Sally: Yeah. Well, those are, we're going to see, I was, that's the upgrade that wasn't cause the economy that was just you upgrading.

Luvvie: Right. That was me upgrading. Right. And then, but the current team that we had in the plan that we had [00:39:00] in the leads that I had, you were like, all right, cool bet the team was supposed to activate multiple parts of revenue, even outside of external partners.

Sally: Ah, okay.

Luvvie: That they did not do because they just started running a muck.

Sally: Yeah.

Luvvie: Like you want to talk about team dynamic, strained what you missed in 2023, not being all the mix. My leads started actually having opposing viewpoints

Sally: Hmm.

Luvvie: [00:39:30] started button heads and started having power

Sally: Hmm.

Luvvie: And then the team below them. Which was relatively new because we basically almost wiped the slate of, of the lower team and got new people in place was messing up so bad that it was just like, I could not, and I was above my pay grade in strategy.

I could not build one more system. I could not pivot one more time. I could not adjust one more thing. And I was [00:40:00] like, and I remember I would text you on the side Like Sally

Sally: Right.

Luvvie: girl, what I should even look at our text messages right now. I should look at our text messages right now and see if I can find something that I sent you in 2023 to just be like, Sally, I am in the wild, wild west.

Sally: Yeah. I will say, all your text messages, even when they, it was like a shit show were so entertaining. So for all of you listening, like the best [00:40:30] way to deal with that is humor. And you just had it in spades. So it was like, you're like, can you, and I would just say like, yeah, I'll get on the phone because I want to help.

And you're funny.

Luvvie: I remember one day I got on zoom with you and you were crying. You were like, HR has never been this funny. You were okay. So I found a text message. I found a text message. Oh my gosh. February 6th, 2023. I said, so last week didn't go well with the team's [00:41:00] productivity. And I'm about to insert myself back into the weekly team meetings.

I basically let blank have it on Friday because her and blank are telling me to let them handle things and things are not being completed plus how they're onboarding. The new team hasn't been effective. It. So you said, damn, okay. The key question is checks and balances. Ask them how you will know things are done.

You talked about wanting to be in some team meetings for culture. So sounds like now there's a multiple goals [00:41:30] of joining, but it doesn't have to be a regular thing once you feel things are back on track. So that's February 6th. and

then February 10th. you happen to talk to somebody else and I basically had to give a message to my leads.

Sally: Yeah. Cause they reached out to me. They started to reach out to me. I guess I wasn't so scary because they were reaching out to

Luvvie: out to you. You said, I'd want you to dig into their roles next and the importance of them really operate in ways that plus one's revenue, you talk about, no, [00:42:00] I said that to you cause you will get, you'll get on a call with them and I said, can you talk more about re imagining of their roles?

So you said, got it. Yeah.

Sally: Yeah. And I remember they tried to create a document amongst themselves about roles and responsibilities so they wouldn't butt heads.

Luvvie: because there were button heads about stupid stuff. Like it was this weird power struggle that was just ridiculous. And yeah, no. [00:42:30] Yeah,

Sally: was a mystery that I didn't solve.

Luvvie: I still didn't, I still don't know what happened. I still, to this day, I don't know. So, yeah, I would say for anybody listening, what would you recommend? Cause again, team building is so tough.

Is this hard? Honestly, business is one thing people is another thing. What are some critical things that anybody who's listening should really keep in mind about building and sustaining a good team?

Sally: I love that [00:43:00] question. So the first thing is that it is complex. I think when we come in as individuals, we think. The, that the problem we're solving in the work is going to be the hardest thing.

Luvvie: Yeah.

Sally: How are we going to launch a new product? How are we going to design this new service? How are we going to build this AI or whatever?

Like we think the most complex thing is the product or service that we're doing. And we think people should be simple. And it's just the wrong thing, the wrong assumption to go into. People are [00:43:30] incredibly complex.

And then you have this multiplier of people with other people. Right? I have this thing in my last talk called the future of teams where I showed a DNA strand

and I was like, the future of teams has to have all of these things for it to be a healthy genome.

Right? Like you need a lot for an individual to be individually be healthy. And then you take that times, you know, 11 people on your team. It's, it's a force multiplier. So [00:44:00] the first thing is actually kind of like calming down and being like, all right, I expect this to be complex. So instead of being frustrated, right?

It's like, I expect complexity. So that's the first thing. The second thing is really looking and saying like from an individual level. are they able to mostly manage the conflict? Like, and so what we learn in recruiting is ask behavioral interviewing questions, not like, how would you do this?

Because people will be like, I would do it brilliantly. And I'm going [00:44:30] to tell you how I would do it. It's like, it's in the past. How have you handled conflict before? What have you learned about the way in which you handled conflict? Because then it's a real story, not a theoretical. And in the real story, figuring out how self aware they are, their ability to be like, what, this is when I know how to ask for support.

And then this is when I can figure stuff out or use support in my own. world, right?

Luvvie: Mm hmm.

Sally: That is so much of it. and I told you this when I started working with you, I [00:45:00] **overhired in the beginning. And when I say overhired, I mean, I hired people who had more skills and emotional maturity than I actually needed in the job.**

And I paid them more because I didn't want to spend any of the time at that time when I was starting coaching at all.

Luvvie: Yeah.

Sally: Like I was so focused on trying to build our brand and get big client names and things like that, that I was like, I am willing to pay for higher skilled people than the job actually requires.

So I [00:45:30] don't have to do any of that. And it served me. I mean, I've had people with me for over 10 years. But when I'm in my CEO group of other, um, women owners, it's helpful to have peer groups for those of you out there. If you're not in a peer group, it's really, really helpful. Um, and we would, we have transparent data to share and we'd show salaries of our key employees.

Again, this is all confidential amongst the CEOs. They'd always be like, you pay your people really well. And I would say. Yeah. And, and you did too, but in [00:46:00] a lower skill band. So I would say the one thing is think about like the ROI of like, if I went up another skill level, I went up another skill level, what does that buy me?

And I do think for small business owners, it can buy a lot in bigger companies. It can, it can make people bored in their jobs. So again, I don't suggest the same strategy for teams. At every company and at every level it, it does depend, but in terms of like small business [00:46:30] entrepreneurs, I think in the beginning, having people who can manage conflict in ways that you can focus more on the product and service and less on the dynamics.

Luvvie: Um,

Sally: but. That's just my point of view. I'm always willing to hear the other side.

Luvvie: got you. So for the person who is a solopreneur right now, who was like, I know I need to build a team. Are there any critical positions that you think everybody should have

Sally: Well, you know, I'm going to start with

finance. Let's [00:47:00] bring it home to like managing cashflow and a, you know, at a pro forma. and then, I mean, honestly, like if you have, to me, I guess I'm a comp girl by background, like if you have the numbers strong, then there's so many paths you can go. Let me, I have no advice because I want the brand marketer to do her thing.

And. you know, a coder to do another thing. And I don't know, like I, that's where I'm like, let your creativity flag [00:47:30] fly, but the business financials,

make sure you have a business plan. It could be a one page business plan and a person that will help you look at the numbers and then test your ideas. That would be the only other thing.

Like I love design thinking principles. Is test your ideas in small ways, which you were doing, you're making small bets and like, let's try the merch store or let's try, let's learn from over this community, you did that really well, that's another, I would say truth across businesses is to try things [00:48:00] out and get, you know, feedback from your customers and then see where's the profit margin and where do you want to grow the last thing I would say is where your energy is like, I've noticed on some projects I'm like, all right, I'm here.

And I'm like, and then I did a project last Friday with Pixar. I can talk about it. I left there. Like I'd had 15 cappuccinos. I was just like, this is my work. Right. And if you follow your energy, inevitably beautiful [00:48:30] things bloom.

Luvvie: if you follow your energy, inevitably, beautiful things bloom, that's the one. And I actually started, so one of the beautiful things that happened once the whole team crumbled is I just started following my energy because I was like, I have nothing to lose now. Just fuck. So that's how the book academy came to be.

Like I was just like, I've been, and that was actually one of the things that the team was supposed to help me launch that they could not figure out, but they And I ended up launching it with like two people, [00:49:00] seven people couldn't figure it out, but I ended up launching it with two people, one of them part time.

So to your point of following your energy, being an actual business strategy that is helpful. Yes, yes, yes,

Sally: Well, okay. And then I'm going to plus one, what you just said, which is sometimes smaller teams. are better. So in the beginning, when I first started, I hired a bunch of part time working moms because I was like, these women know how to get stuff done in the four hours that they have. [00:49:30] Okay. They were all amazing, but the coordination cost of having like 10 part time people, even though they're all great, the coordination cost is real versus smaller SWAT team working full time.

I can still be flex and I love my working moms and they will figure it out, but having fewer people, less coordination time.

Luvvie: You're not wrong. You're actually not wrong. Cause there was a point where my team got to the point where we were doing to write one deck, it'd be, it would take six people and I'd be like, but, but how, like, it was [00:50:00] only one person on this. And then by the time it get edited, six, seven people have touched it.

Meanwhile, lean and mean only two people can touch it most. So Yeah. I think that's a really good point is in the growth, in the scaling stage, I think that's Bigger is not always better.

Sally: No. And, and there is something about creativity. So

if you take your seven people who are all touching the deck, they all have a different creative lens. And so, you know, [00:50:30] that's beautiful, but it can also just take longer, you know, versus like, I have a strong point of view. I'm, I want to hear a couple of different points of view to.

But like, let's go, let's launch, right? Like it's not a perfectionist. It's a, you know,

Luvvie: tell us what you're seeing now with the companies that you're working with, with the teams that you're working with, what are the patterns and is there anything that we all need to know

Sally: Yeah. I mean, I will say the patterns are getting better in terms of like people being [00:51:00] more open and transparent, um, people saying when they need support. So I will say like in the past, like. more than pre covid. No one talked about like what they what their needs were in terms of well being like your team was very inspired to be like, I'm tired and that can be good because then people aren't posing and I don't like when people pretend because if you're dealing with pretend like that's just let's just keep it real.

Like let's deal with the facts. Um, so the trends are the [00:51:30] people being honest. The challenge obviously is how to manage that. So how do you support teams in a, in a way that you're essentially managing tensions? That's probably the framework I'd love for people to walk away with is like, they're healthy tensions of like, how much can I openly share and ask for support?

How much do I need to figure shit out myself? Because I'm an adult, right? And and how do we just dance in that and be able to openly ask and be able to navigate it in a way that we know it's going to be [00:52:00] messy. But if we're honest. and we're considering ourselves curious and learners, it'll be fine. And

then just continue to surround yourself with people who have the right mindset, because you cannot train that in my, in my past, as much as you can train them to do beautiful brand.

But if they have that mindset, that curious, open, decent EQ, their ability to have engaged in those conversations. It's going to be great. And you're going to have, **this is what I want for everyone. I want everyone to say, [00:52:30] this is the best work of my life. Not like, Oh, remember the good old days? Love, you remember that first book when you launched it?**

Like that was just like the lit team, right? Like right now create the work that's like, this is the best work we've ever done. With the best team. It's totally possible. Just consider yourself more of a chemist, right? As a leader.

Luvvie: experimenting, throwing some things in the mix,

Sally: right.

Luvvie: things won't work, [00:53:00] some will learning from all of it, because that is one thing I did is I've learned more about people in this last couple of years, and I probably wanted to know, um, And Gen Z low key scares me. They've traumatized me at this point, but that's a different story.

Um, I'm back, but yes, no, Sally, I, this is so good. I think this is going to bless so many people. I just wanted y'all to see and hear from the team Gardner who was in the mix for all the [00:53:30] chaos.

Sally: I tried. Everything's an experiment. It was, it was fun. Like, you know, back to like, even, even obviously firing people isn't fun, but like engaging in things that matter with people who are lovely, we will all figure it out. It was a joy. I will work with you anytime, any day.

Yes.

Luvvie: Same, you're amazing and yeah, no, this has been awesome. Thank you for being a part of All Love Media, and our journey and this critical [00:54:00] moment that I really think unfolded as it should have, because I think the lessons are so great and the transformation and the, what it really taught me, like in the crumbling of my company, I actually had to ask myself, What I really wanted to spend my energy on,

Sally: There you go.

Luvvie: what was worthy of my time.

And also one of the things that we forget to do when life is happening to us is we stop, we forget we have a choice. [00:54:30] So it really kind of was like, I feel like God, like through, uh, through a little, like stick at me and was like, Hey, pay attention. I literally feel like God was like, I'm about to throw this at you because you're not paying attention to me. And I was like, okay, I'm paying attention. You're right. I'm right. I'm here. I'm here. I'm here. So I received the blessing of the crumbling and the company that I am building now is way more intentional, way more focused. And, um, you played a [00:55:00] huge part in that.

Sally: Thank you. Well, we'll continue to follow our energy.

Luvvie: We will continue to follow our energy. Sally. You're amazing. More to come.

Sally: Thank you.

Luvvie: Wait, wait, wait, before you go, my producer Tish is coming on because she has questions. She's been listening in and she has questions for me and Sally about more of [00:55:30] how I handled that moment as a human who had to show up in other areas of her life. So listen to this next 10 minutes.

It's really good. Okay.

Letisha: so producer here listening in on this conversation. I was saying that Lovey was so high level. With all of this in her past episodes. And now we're getting like the T we're getting the D the deep down deep, the personalities, you know, at play the power struggles, the tired and fatigue and all of this.

So I was saying like, so meanwhile, you still had a human every day and like, show up. Cause we, you're a [00:00:30] public person. So you're giving us stuff, your audience stuff, you're giving your family friends. So I was just wondering, like, how did you, how did you do that?

Luvvie: to be a CEO to a crumbling company. Why trying to be a wife, a daughter, a sister. Let me tell you, the struggle was real. The struggle was so nobody realized on social media, nothing was happening. Right? Like, like I didn't miss a beat publicly, which is one of the things that people have said to me when I even talked about how hard 2023 was folks was like, yo, [00:01:00] you didn't miss a beat.

Like you kept it going. Can I say, you said, how did I do it? Ooh, that's a good question. Cause even I'm trying to figure out how I did it. It'd be like, I'd get off a meeting where they just melted in the meeting. And I'm just like, what just happened? And I would post, uh, something or some perspective that I had about something different.

It was like, I was compartmentalizing my moments, like I had to, because, but then after my work day would end, [00:01:30] I would go sit on the couch and I just sit there for like 30 minutes, just like. Catching my breath. Like just being like, I hate people. I hate everybody. I want nobody to speak to me. And that's kind of how my days function.

I was, I don't know. I don't even know how I did it. That

Letisha: Well, I mean, Sally, what do you see just in your work when you're dealing with a public persona, a public brand, personal brand, also a business woman, [00:02:00] And so they're dealing with the, like she says, the crumbling of her business, but she's still a public personal brand that she's got to show up for. How are you helping them do both?

Sally: So I'm weird. I actually think more of the transparency is the right path. It's more of the Brene Brown approach. So I think the reality is all leaders are going through shit. I mean, you remember Levy, I showed up and I was like, Hey, my dad just got diagnosed with stage four. I have months left with [00:02:30] him.

And you were there for me. And I was like sad, right? And I had stuff going on with my daughter and you were like, I get it. And so we could, we had to check in as humans and then we could get to the work and the funny and the like wholeness bringing back and that's why every time we met, we were able to, I think for, I'll speak for myself, I was able to be like, all right, this is what's going on.

For me, like, right. And you were, you were there and then we will [00:03:00] do work, which frankly is lovely because I don't want to just think about all the hard personal stuff. Right. A little bit of my therapy and then come back and be like, okay, now I can do all the things because we are whole humans and we do have to rotate into these roles.

And the more we're transparent, then you know that when I'm showing up with my energy, that's a little bit like down that you're like, Oh, it's not that she doesn't want to show up for lovey. It's that her heart is heavy. [00:03:30] And so

to the extent that people are comfortable, this is a, it is a shift from professional, like what does a professional look like?

How do they show up? The more that they can say, this is what's going on for me. Then the other people in the room are like, Oh, okay. It's, it's not, you're mad at me. You know, that you're, because your energy is different. You can't pretend like this. There's this whole research called covering where people like cover up their gender or they cover up, you know, something that they think is, is going to be a [00:04:00] conflict in how they show up professionally.

Even straight white men cover up something that might be like they're dyslexic or they grew up poor or whatever. We all cover up to a certain extent and it takes away our energy and people misread it because they can tell something's different. up, but they don't know what it is. So my thing is like, just to the extent that you know, we're all evolving in our own way, but to the extent that you can open up a little bit and be like, Hey, this is what's real.

I think it makes you stronger lovey because people want to know [00:04:30] that a very strong black woman who's fucking hilarious also is like, I can't talk to anyone right now. And I'm angry. And actually, I think you showed up that, because I follow you, I think you did show up that way, and, and you're doing it more now, but maybe it's just like, the rose is starting to open up to all the,

Luvvie: yeah, because here's the thing that I will say, like, to your point of like bringing the person into the work of it all, I always understood, like, even with my team, when you were talking about like the [00:05:00] work therapy, I always understood, like I'm dealing with people. Right. So I always told my team and we started doing icebreakers in the beginning of our meetings to one, bring the human in the room.

So we're not just jumping straight into work. So everybody had a chance to be heard. But I remember one day I, I, I don't know what, what they did. That was just like a hot mess. I called a meeting and when I get upset, I don't yell. People probably assume when I get upset, I externalize. I actually internalize [00:05:30] whenever I get mad.

So I like really brewed, like you could feel the gray clouds, the storm clouds over me, but I will say nothing. I will probably more whisper when I'm pissed at anything. And I remember I got on one day, went with them and I was like, guys, what's happening? Help me understand what just went, what just happened.

And they're all sitting there looking scolded. I realized my words cut, even when I don't use them. Me even saying the words, what's happening. Cause it was a day where I was frustrated. They was pissing me off a thousand times [00:06:00] while I'm managing home stuff, while I'm managing friends stuff, while I'm managing.

So I literally got on a call with them and I was like, what is happening? What just happened? Help me understand. Like I.

Sally: because, you know what this means? I'm

Luvvie: Oh, there was, there was hurt. They were hurt. They felt so hurt by me. And I was like, I didn't even yell at y'all. I didn't even yell at you. I just came and they were like, oh my God, our feelings are hurt. And I was just like, oh my God, I cannot handle. But then I, [00:06:30] again, the leader has to take the knee. Right.

I circled back with them and I said, listen, I might not be showing up as my best self right now. Cause I don't even got it. I literally did. I was like, I don't have it. I was like, my nerves are short. I'm managing a lot right now. So I probably did not come at y'all in the way that you would have loved the most.

I apologize for that, but I'm also human in this. Like I've had multiple moments where I have taken the need to my team just to also let them know that like. In making an [00:07:00] apology and making a mistake, you're not showing weakness. I actually modeled and I made sure, cause during that time, I was also very clear that I had to model who I wanted them to be, so I modeled that.

And that also is why it made it even extra frustrating. Cause I was like, I think I did the right things. I did the things. It

Letisha: This is my final question

Luvvie: is

Letisha: I was listening. So lovey, do you think that. Because you weren't public [00:07:30] while it was how you weren't transparent with your audience while it was happening, right? You were compartmentalizing everything, right? In some ways in what you're doing now, do you feel like it's bringing?

perspective or healing or like, is it closing a chapter or what is it doing for you now to open up and tell her? I mean, you're telling everyone you lost, you

almost went bankrupt, you fired people, right? So like now you're coming out with it after the fact. [00:08:00] I wonder how this is helping you process what happened.

Luvvie: So I couldn't talk about it while it was happening because I was too close to it

Sally: Hmm.

Luvvie: I wouldn't have been able to talk about it as, as candidly because the characters were still in the company. Right. And again, because I was so close to it, I, I was right here. I could not even talk about it because I was, I felt like I was in survival, like acute survival mode.

It was like, every day was giving me just enough energy to make it to the next day. So I was like, I can't [00:08:30] even, I don't even have time to talk about it. Nope. Now in talking about it, which I'm still processing, because even at the end of 2023, I was still dealing with fallout. So when I fired the team, By the end of June, 2023, I was still dealing with fallout.

Heck, I feel like I'm still dealing with some fallout, but there was like acute fallout for like six months where I was still finding mistakes, paying for invoices that weren't being paid for. So now in doing it, [00:09:00] I do think one, it's going to close a chapter, but I also think I'm away from it a little bit and have been reflecting on it enough to where I can look at some of it objectively.

Right. It's like, it's like I'm watching myself as a character in a, in a, in a story. Now, like, I'm like, this is a story that's unfolding in my brain. Like, oh, can, and this happened, but I'm like repressing characters. Cause heck I repressed a whole bookkeeper. So, [00:09:30] so yeah, I think, I think now is the gift of like, I've been able to go back and say, this is not a story to tell in five years, in five years, I will not care if this even happened in five years.

I'm like, that would just be six months out, seven months. We're nine months out actually now. And I'm like, Oh, I've birthed a new company. Okay. It's

Sally: reflections.

Luvvie: recent reflections.

Sally: I mean, you can't reflect in the moment. So great. And to your point in five years, you won't care, but there's some, there's some [00:10:00] reflection of like, ah, what just happened?

Luvvie: And it's still, it's still, um, near enough to where I still remember details because in six months, I would have forgotten some of these details where I'll just be like, what did we say? Who did what? Whose name was that? So now is the right time.

Sally: Okay. And that's another interesting thing about energy, right? I couldn't remember everyone's name, but I will always remember our work. So like, it's back to like, what's sticky.

What, what stays with you? Right. I mean, I [00:10:30] was really honored when I listened back and you, and you said something like, you're like, and Sally, brilliant.

I was like, brilliant? Okay, good. Cause I felt like I just set you up for a shitty year. That could have gone different way.

Letisha: Well, everybody, I think we just did the whole, you know, when you like, you stay in the theater to see the credits and then they come back with something else. That's what we just did. A little bonus

Luvvie: You know what? We might actually have to drop this as just a little bonus situation. We might actually just be like,

Letisha: We got to come back and say, [00:11:00] wait a second. It ain't over. And we got to drop this.

Luvvie: I think we, I think we should, I actually think we should drop this as a bonus. That that's good. Tish, I'm glad you actually made an appearance. That's good. Sally, this is so good.

Sally: Anytime, any day, you tell me where.